Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

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DEPARTMENT PASS SECRETARY'S PARTY

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, US, XF

SUBJ: BREZHNEV REMARKS ON THE MIDDLE EAST

1. SUMMARY AND COMMENTS. BREZHNEV TOOK A TOUGH LINE ON U.S. POSITIONS ON MIDDLE EAST IN HIS KREMLIN LUNCHEON SPEECH FOR PRIME MINISTER WILSON FEBRUARY 14. BUT HE DID NOT FORECLOSE SOVIET ACCEPACNE OF A NEW ROUND OF ARAB-ISRAELI BILATERAL AGREEMENTS. AND WE BELIEVE HIS REMARKS WERE CONSCIDUSLY AIMED CONFIDENTIAL

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AT SECRETARY'S UPCOMING TALKS WITH GROMYKO IN GENEVA.

BREZHNEV FORCEFULLY REASSERTED SOVIET INSISTENCE THAT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE BE RECONVENED AND HE SHARPLY CRITICIZED PAST "PARTIAL MEASURES" AND "CERTAIN PERSONS (KOE-KTO)" WHO HOPE TO USE THESE AS A "SOPORIFIC" FOR THE ARABS (A BARELY DISGUISED REFERENCE TO THE SECRETARY AS WELL AS THE ISRAELIS). NEVER-THELESS, BREZHNEV APPEARED DELIBERATELY TO LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN ON ANOTHER ROUND OF BILATERAL AGREEMENTS, PROVIDING THEY LED TO RESUMPTION OF THE MEPC. BREZHNEV, APPARENTLY TO CLEAR THE WAY FOR GENEVA, FUZZED THE QUESTION OF PLO REPRESENTATION. HE SAID ONLY THAT "REPRESENTATIVES" (UNSPECIFIED) OF THE PALESTINIANS WOULD HAVE TO SPEAK AT THE CONFERENCE. END SUMMARY AND COMMENTS.

- 2. BREZHNEV CHARACTERIZED THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION AS EXPLOSIVE AND ASSERTED THAT IT WILL REMAIN SO AS LONG AS THE AGGRESSOR HOLDS OTHERS' LANDS AND THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLES ARE FLOUTED.
- 3. IN ASSESSING PAST AND FUTURE STEPS TOWARD A SETTLEMENT, HE INSISTED THAT "PARTIRAL MEASURES IN THEMSELVES" -- SPECIFICALLY DISENGAGEMENT -- ARE USEFUL ONLY "WHEN THESE MEASURES MEAN STEPS LEADING TO THE SPEEDIEST POSSIBLE REAL PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT." BREZHNEV THUS TOOK A LINE SIMILAR TO THAT WE HAVE HEARD PRIVATELY FROM SOVIET OFFICIALS THAT THE USSR WOULD VIEW ANY FUTURE AGREEMENTS ON FORCE SEPARATION POSITIVELY IF THEY WERE LINKED SPECIFICALLY TO A GENERAL SETTLEMENT AND GENEVA. HE DROVE HOME THIS POINT BY CLAIMING THAT PAST "PARTIAL BILATERAL MEASURES" HAVE NEITHER EASED ME TENSIONS NOR SLOWED THE ME ARMS RACE.
- 4. NOTHING CAN REPLACE A DURABLE PEACE SETTLEMENT, HE SAID, AND DELAYING THIS SETTLEMENT IS "IMPERMISSIBLE." THIS, HE CONCLUDED, IS WHY THE SOVIET UNION RESOLUTELY DECLARES ITSELF FOR THE SPEEDIEST RESUMPTION OF THE MEPC IN WHICH "REPRESENTATIVES" (UNSPECIFIED) OF THE PALESTINIANS MUST SPEAK ON AN EQUAL FOOTING (N RAVNYKH NACHALAKH) WITH OTHER PEOPLE AT THE CONFERENCE. ESTABLISHMENT OF ENDURING PERACEFUL SETTLEMENT, HE POINTED OUT, SERVES THE INTERESTS OF ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING THE ISRAELIS, "WHO CAN HARDLY BE INTERESTED IN LIVING ENDLESSLY IN A COUNTRY CONVERTED INTO A CONFIDENTIAL

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